News From the Wyoming Department of Health

Thursday, March 30, 2006

Immunizations Bill Welcomed by Department of Health

CHEYENNE –The Wyoming Department of Health is welcoming a new state law that will eventually ensure all Wyoming children receive free vaccines and is working to get the expanded program up and running.

Wyoming Governor Dave Freudenthal recently signed legislation, which includes a \$5 million biennium appropriation, to provide vaccines for children who do not qualify under the Federal Vaccines for Children program.

Once the program is implemented, all Wyoming children will receive free vaccines at participating private physicians' offices, public health nursing offices, community health centers, hospitals and rural health centers that are enrolled in the program. The only cost to parents will be the administration fee or office fees charged by the healthcare provider.

Wyoming Department of Health Director Dr. Brent Sherard is calling the vaccine law one of the best things to come out of the recent legislative session. "This is an excellent investment in the health of Wyoming's children," he said.

The Wyoming Department of Health Immunization Program has not yet determined when the program will begin. "I am asking parents to stay on track with their children's immunizations and not to delay while waiting for the program to be in place," Dr. Sherard said.

"We are creating a strategic plan, including timelines, for the soonest possible implementation date," says Katelyn Wells-Fahling, immunization program manager.

Wells-Fahling noted the rules and regulations for the legislative act must yet be written and approved. In addition, program policies and procedures must be developed for providers to ensure compatibility with the legislation's requirements. "These are important steps, and they will take time to complete," she said.

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